

Joseph Gray House
CH-757
Nanjemoy vic.
Private

1855

Erected in 1855, this 2 ½ story frame dwelling is a rare and exceptional example of Italianate- inspired architecture in Charles County. While the most prominent feature is the center tower, typical Italianate details include tall full arched windows, tower, wide overhanging eaves, and paired double doors. Although only a handful were constructed in Charles County, the Italianate style enjoyed nationwide popularity just before the Civil War and variations persisted well into the Victorian Era.

The dwelling is associated with the Gray family. In 1855, John and Sarah Gray Millar sold Lot #5 of Sarah Gray's father's estate to her brother Joseph A. Gray for \$1400. Soon after, Gray likely expanded an existing structure by constructing the current dwelling. Fourteen years later in 1869, Joseph and wife Jane Gray sold the farm for \$6000 to George A. Linton of Philadelphia. During the 1940's the property was acquired by the Blackburn family who occupied the site until 1969.

Inventory No. CH-757

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Joseph Gray House

other Blackburn House

2. Location

street and number	9555 Ironsides Road	not for publication
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city, town	Naniemov	X	vicinity
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county Charles

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name	Harry and Frederica Foxwell
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street and number	9555 Ironsides Road	telephone	unknown
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city, town	Nanjemov	state	MD	zip code	20662
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4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Charles County Courthouse tax map and parcel: 60 p. 143

city, town	La Plata	liber	257	folio	513
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5. Primary Location of Additional Data

☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report
☐ Other

6. Classification

Category		Ownership		Current Function		Resource Count	
						Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/>	district	<input type="checkbox"/>	public	<input type="checkbox"/>	agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/>	landscape
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private	<input type="checkbox"/>	commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/>	recreation/culture
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	both	<input type="checkbox"/>	defense	<input type="checkbox"/>	religion
<input type="checkbox"/>	site			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	domestic	<input type="checkbox"/>	social
<input type="checkbox"/>	object			<input type="checkbox"/>	education	<input type="checkbox"/>	transportation
				<input type="checkbox"/>	funerary	<input type="checkbox"/>	work in progress
				<input type="checkbox"/>	government	<input type="checkbox"/>	unknown
				<input type="checkbox"/>	health care	<input type="checkbox"/>	vacant/not in use
				<input type="checkbox"/>	industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	other:
						<u>1</u>	<u> </u>
						<u> </u>	<u> </u>
						<u> </u>	<u> </u>
						<u> </u>	<u> </u>
						<u>1</u>	<u> </u>
							buildings
							sites
							structures
							objects
							Total
						Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory	
						0	

7. Description

Inventory No. CH-757

Condition

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Erected in 1855, the Joseph Gray House is a rare and exceptional example of Italianate- inspired architecture in Charles County. While the most prominent feature is the center tower, typical Italianate details include tall full arched windows, tower, wide overhanging eaves, and paired double doors. The dwelling consists of a 2 1/2 story, five-bay, frame structure with a continuous brick foundation and a composition shingle roof. The cornice is boxed and the roof is pierced by two interior corbelled chimneys. The house faces southeast, stands approximately 100 yards from Ironsides Road, and is surrounded by a forested buffer. The dwelling has an overall L- plan with the principal elevation having a side-gable orientation. A one-story shed addition has been recently constructed in the rear.

The facade is characterized by the centered stair tower adorned with a one story balustrade porch that sheltered the paneled double door entrance. Flanking the tower are two decorative gables that hold single full arch windows. The facade is visually symmetrical and includes two first-story and two second-story windows on either side of the tower.

The northeast elevation includes a pair of attic story 4-light compass windows and five windows on the first and second story. The rear elevation includes three second story windows in the ell. The rear of the main block mirrors the facade with an attic and second-story pair of full-arch window accentuating the tower and two windows to the south. The southwest elevation includes two compass windows similar to that found on the opposite elevation. A single window occupies the first and second-story near the facade.

The interior includes a typical center passage, single-pile plan. The first floor interior appears to be largely unaltered with original mantels, trim, doors and hardware intact. The dining room currently has paneling over original plaster walls. Although architectural evidence is scarce, the northern portion of the existing structure may incorporate an earlier building.

8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-757

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Specific dates 1855

Architect/Builder Unknown

Construction dates 1855

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

The Joseph Gray House is a rare and relatively well-preserved example of Italianate-inspired architecture in Charles County. The Italianate style enjoyed nationwide popularity just before the Civil War although variations persisted well into the Victorian Era. Most typical elements seen locally include wide cornices adorned with brackets or dentils, and arched doorways.

Following the Civil War, Charles County suffered the same fate as most of the southern states. The basis of the economy, slave labor, was gone. While planters continued to rely heavily on tobacco cultivation, slave labor was replaced with various systems of tenancy or wage labor. Due to dwindling profits, credit collapsed and many planters fell deep into debt. In addition, Federal taxes levied by the "carpet-bag" government threatened landowners with the loss of their land. This lack of capital made it difficult for farmers to branch out into other agricultural and commercial pursuits. The post-war period also marked the end of large farms. In 1870 there were 545 farms in Charles County. By the turn of the century, that number had more than tripled to 1900 farms. Farm size continually decreased as large farms, containing over 500 acres, were divided. The most dramatic increase was seen in the number of farms under fifty acres, which more than doubled between 361 farms in 1880 and 728 farms in 1920.

In 1855, John and Sarah Gray Millar sold Lot #5 of Sarah Gray's father's estate to her brother Joseph A. Gray for \$1400. In 1869 Joseph and wife Jane Gray sold the farm for \$6000 to George A. Linton of Philadelphia. During the 1940's the property was acquired by the Blackburn family who occupied the site until 1969. (1)

Endnotes

(1) Charles County Land Records GAH 2/301; JS 1/277.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. CH-757

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 14.96

Acreage of historical setting 369

Quadrangle name Nanjemoy

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Joseph Gray House is associated with Charles County Property Tax Map 60, Parcel 143.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cathy Hardy/ Historic Preservation Planner

organization Charles County Planning

date 3/9/2003

street and number 200 Baltimore Street

telephone 301-396-5815

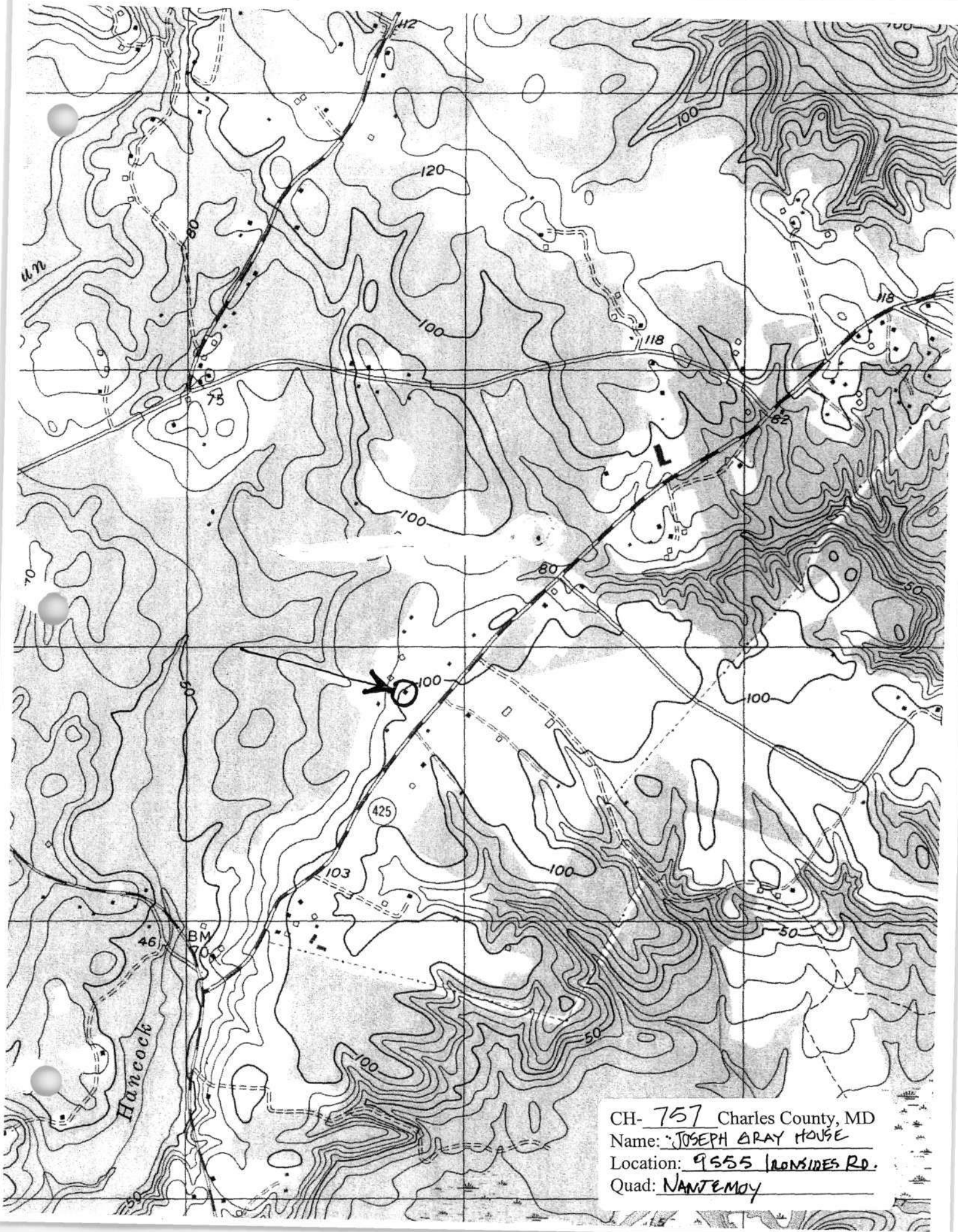
city or town LaPlata

state MD zip code 20646

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600



CH- 757 Charles County, MD
Name: JOSEPH GRAY HOUSE
Location: 9555 IRONSIDES RD.
Quad: NANTENOV



CH-757

JOSEPH GRAY HOUSE

NANTJEMOY, MD

10/2002

CHARDY

MD SHPO

FRONT ELEVATION

1 OF 6



CH-757
JOSEPH GRAY HOUSE
NANTHEMOY,
D/2002
C. HARDY
MID SHPO
LOOKING N 20PB



CH 757
JOSEPH GRAY HOUSE
NANTENNY, MD
10/2002
C. HARDY
MD SHPO
GABRIEL DETAIL
BOFF



CH-757

JOSEPH GRAY HOUSE

NANTENOV, MD

10/2002

C. HARDY

MD SHPO

REAR

4 OF 6



CH-757

JOSEPH GRAY HOUSE

NANTJEMOY, MD

10/2002

C. HARDY

MD SHPO

STAIR

5 OF 6



CH-757

JOSEPH GRAY HOUSE

NANTJEMOY, MD

10/2002

C. HARDY

MD SHPO

SOUTH PARLOR MANTLE

60F6